

FEDERATION HOLDS AWARDS DINNER AND GEARS UP FOR THE NEW MILENNIUM

By Jennifer Coccozza, Planner

The Dutchess County Planning Federation (DCPF) recently revived the tradition of holding an annual awards dinner with an event which was held in November at Christos in Poughkeepsie. Nearly 100 people attended the dinner, with 24 of Dutchess County's 30 municipalities represented. The special guest speaker for the evening was Carmella R. Mantello, Executive Director of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Communities Council, who expressed her commitment to the goals and objectives of the Greenway Program and to its success in Dutchess County. Judith Breselor, the Greenway's Senior Planner, was also present.

The Federation was honored to have County Executive William R. Steinhaus on hand to present this year's DCPF awards to Martin Clarke, Richard Hermans, and Ron Sauers and Associates for their achievements in planning. Mr. Steinhaus also awarded a tree and tree dedication plaque to each of the 13 municipalities that had joined the Greenway Compact, in celebration of their commitment to the Greenway goals. Each Greenway Compact community will choose where their commemorative tree will be planted this spring.



County Executive William R. Steinhaus presents the Town of Pawling, represented by Planning Board Chair Kent Johnson, with an award for joining the Greenway Compact.

The evening commenced with the naming of the new DCPF Board of Directors, which includes Neil Wilson as President and Michael Frazier as Treasurer. Former DCPF President Marcy Appell was honored for her many years of service and will remain on the Board as a member.

The Board recently updated its Constitution and Bylaws. Major revisions include the opening of DCPF Board membership to permit Town/Village/City council members to hold office (Board membership was formerly restricted to planning and zoning board members), and the new task of assisting in the implementation of the County's master plan Directions and the Greenway Compact Program Greenway Connections.

"Federation" Cont'd on page 2

In this issue:

- RENTAL HOUSING MARKET EXPLODES
- HELP WANTED
- A MODERN ROUNDABOUT
- CENSUS 2000
- GREENWAY COMPACT UPDATE
- A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS....

STEINHAUS ANNOUNCES NEW EFFORT TO PLAN SMART GROWTH AND PROTECT OPEN SPACE

Dutchess County Executive William R. Steinhaus has proposed to the Dutchess County Legislature an expansion and restructuring of the Dutchess County Planning Board. The proposal will amend the Dutchess County Charter (constitution) to increase the number of citizen volunteers that make up the board from nine to thirteen members, as well as redefine its role.



The Dutchess County Planning Board tours the historic Greystone property with Town of Wappinger Supervisor Constance Smith.

According to Mr. Steinhaus, "I feel we can streamline and make more effective our efforts to preserve open space and farmland, protect our environment, address our housing shortage, and more widely plan infrastructure if we broaden our representation of citizens and organizations

"Steinhaus" Cont'd on page 2

Dutchess County Planning Federation Board of Directors:

Stephen Allen	Hyde Park Planning Board Chair
Marcy Appell	Town of Red Hook Planning Board Chair
Scott Craft	Town of Pleasant Valley Planning Board Member
Cathy Fenn	Village of Millerton Planning Board Chair
Mike Frazier (Treasurer)	Village of Rhinebeck Trustee
Peggy Kelland	Town of Poughkeepsie Zoning Board of Appeals Member
Brad Roeller	Village of Millbrook Planning Board Chair
Lou Turpin	Village of Rhinebeck Planning Board Chair
Neil Wilson (President)	City of Poughkeepsie's Zoning Board of Appeals Chair

The Dutchess County Planning Federation is looking forward to providing informative and exciting planning education programs for Dutchess County officials and residents, including guest speakers and the upcoming 20th Annual Short Course. Look for announcements in upcoming mailings and editions of Plan On It, the Dutchess County Planning Federation newsletter. 🌳

Dutchess County Planning Federation 2000 Award Recipients:



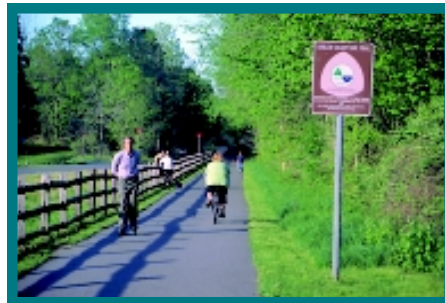
Beautiful restorations by Ron Sauers and Associates have helped other developers see Beacon's potential, encouraging renewed investment in the city. Ron Sauers and Associates has completed the rehabilitation of three buildings containing 14 apartments and 7 storefronts in Beacon's revitalized downtown area.

*Award Recipients: **Ron and Ronnie Beth Sauers***



With a photography gallery on the first floor and an apartment on the second, the new Clarke Building in the Village of Tivoli combines a mixture of uses, an element that is so important for the social and economic vitality of village centers.

*Award Recipient: **Martin Clarke.***



A wonderful example of volunteer support and intermunicipal cooperation, the Harlem Valley Rail Trail Association has helped make this rail-trail one of the State's finest, regularly drawing people from western Dutchess County, Connecticut, Westchester and Putnam Counties.

*Award Recipient: **HRVTA President Richard Hermans***

on the Planning Board. Our development and land use policies and strategies will be improved if we include more voices from our key constituencies, stakeholders and traditionally involved community organizations."

The proposal by the County Executive also expands the present role of the Planning Board of advising the Planning Commissioner to now have a formal advisory role to help guide policies for the County Legislature and County Executive.

It is hoped that the Legislature will act on Mr. Steinhaus' proposal expeditiously. Joel Diamond, Chair of the Dutchess County Planning Board, says, "an expanded board reflects the need for collaboration among interest groups as the Board considers many critical and interrelated issues such as workforce development, adequate housing supply, resource protection, and urban redevelopment." 🌳

Greenway Compact Update

A majority of Dutchess County governments have already adopted the Greenway Compact. The Village of Fishkill became the sixteenth community on January 8th, joining the Town and Village of Pawling, Dover, Amenia, Northeast, Millerton, Pine Plains, Beekman, Union Vale, Beacon, Red Hook, Tivoli, Clinton, the Town of Poughkeepsie and Dutchess County as Compact members. Two more communities are scheduled to take action in the near future.

PLAN ON IT STAFF



Editor - Lynette Thorne
Graphic Designer - Dennis L. Amodeo

PLAN ON IT is a publication of the Dutchess County Planning Department in conjunction with the Dutchess County Planning Federation. PLAN ON IT brings local, regional and state planning news to over 1600 individuals and organizations. If you would like to be added to our mailing list or wish to share your views on planning, write to Editor, PLAN ON IT, 27 High Street, 2nd Floor, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12601. Phone (845) 486-3600

HELP WANTED

By Lindsay Carille, Junior Planner

What is the number one priority for employers in Dutchess County? To find out, the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation and the Dutchess County Tourism Promotion Agency conducted five focus group sessions in November with representatives of 58 companies to gain direct input on employer issues and employer opportunities in Dutchess County. Five industries were represented: Semiconductor/Electronic Components, Manufacturing, Value-Added Services, Healthcare and Tourism. The topics outlined for discussion were: workforce development, costs of doing business, telecommunications, capital formation, and traditional infrastructure.

So what is the number one priority for employers? It appears to be a tie between the need to find qualified workers and finding a place for them to live. Even though the groups represented a variety of industries and a cross-section of private and public employees within Dutchess County, the discussions always led to recruitment and housing issues.

Each industry group identified the difficulties recruiting qualified workers to our area for both entry-level, non-college graduate jobs and high-tech, college-degree-minimum jobs, as a major problem. There are concerns that Dutchess is losing workers to more affordable locations with a wider variety of employment choices, and that Dutchess is not reaching potential employees both within and outside the County.



Housing was the other hot topic. Employers claim that a major reason they have difficulty recruiting workers to Dutchess County is a lack of housing availability, including temporary housing (hotel space and rentals) and affordable housing (both rental and single family), as well as an overall shortage of available

"Help Wanted" Cont'd on page 4



Jefferson at Merritt Park in the Village of Fishkill (across from the Gap Distribution Center), a luxury apartment complex constructed in 2000, is now the most expensive apartment complex in Dutchess County with rents, not including utilities, ranging from \$1,113 for a one-bedroom to \$1,583 for a three-bedroom.

Rental Housing Market Explodes

By Anne Saylor, Housing Coordinator

The recently released Dutchess County Rental Housing Survey shows the County's rental housing market has experienced several dramatic changes in 2000. According to the survey, during the past year the County experienced the highest rent increases, the lowest vacancy rate, and the highest number of units constructed since the survey was begun in 1982.

Costs

The following tables show the average rents in apartment complexes and multi-family apartments, and the percentage rent change from 1999:

Apartment Complexes

	Average Rent in 2000	Percent Increase from 1999
Studio	\$554	0
1-Bedroom	\$721	7.1
2-Bedroom	\$855	7.7
3-Bedroom	\$1,159	19.3

Multi-family Apartments

	Average Rent in 2000	Percent Increase from 1999
Studio	\$515	17.8
1-Bedroom	\$630	9.2
2-Bedroom	\$789	12.6
3-Bedroom	\$940	23.7

Vacancies

As significant as the increases in average rents was the decrease in the apartment complex vacancy rate from 2.0 percent in 1999 to 1.5 percent in 2000. Housing experts recognize a 5.0 percent vacancy rate as an indicator of a healthy rental market. It is low enough not to negatively affect landlords, but high enough to permit tenant mobility. The current vacancy rate makes moving very difficult and is the major factor in the increasing rents.

The vacancy rate dropped in spite of the construction of a total of 496 new apartment complex units in the Towns of Poughkeepsie and Wappinger and the Village Fishkill. This is the largest number of apartment complex units constructed since the survey began in 1982.

Summary

The positive side of these statistics is they are a result of the County's strong economy and our attractiveness as a community. The negative side is that rents are becoming increasingly unaffordable to both current and future residents. High rents also make it difficult for households to save for the downpayment and closing costs associated with the purchase of a home. Most importantly, these high rents could negatively affect new business location decisions as they decide to locate in areas where housing is more affordable to their employees. For these reasons it is important that we continue to encourage the development of a variety of types of rental housing throughout the County.

"Help Wanted" Cont'd from page 3
houses in all price ranges. With the average price of a single-family home in Dutchess County at more than \$160,000*, "starter" priced homes are hard to find.

Some suggestions given to ease the housing problem were:

- establish a centralized relocation service to provide housing searches and community information;
- support development of diverse and affordable housing options by
 - initiating incentives and/or subsidies in targeted price ranges;
 - communicating with local planning and zoning boards to stress the need to allow diverse housing options, and;
 - identifying areas in Dutchess County that would be conducive to housing development, including the reuse of existing vacant structures.

The focus groups concluded that it is in everyone's best interest to promote affordable housing alternatives; after all, if most of us couldn't afford to buy the house we presently live in, how can we expect our children to? 🌳

*Source: Dutchess County Real Property Tax Department

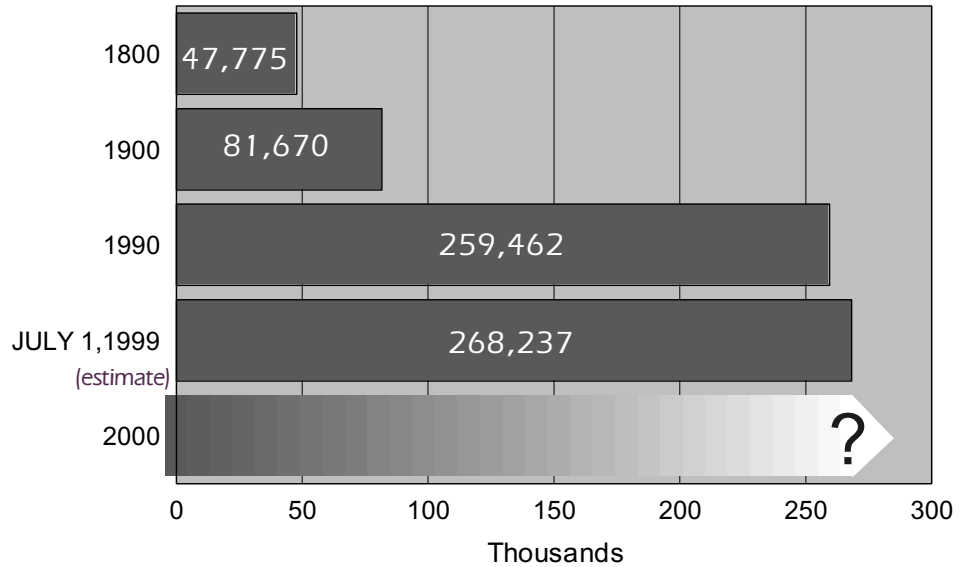
Staff Notes



Welcome!

Mark DeBald has joined the Department of Planning and Development as a Planner. Mark holds a B.S. in Geography and recently earned a Masters in Regional Planning from SUNY Albany. Mark brings six years of professional experience to the Department, having previously served as a transportation officer in the U.S. Army. Mark will work in the MPO section of the Department and his responsibilities will include long-range transportation planning, data management, and various MPO projects.

Dutchess County Population*



CENSUS 2000

By Lindsay Carille, Junior Planner

The results of Census 2000 show that the nation's resident population on Census Day, April 1, 2000 was 281,421,906. New York State's population grew to 18,976,457 and due to a drop in our share of the U.S. population, we lost two Congressional seats and moved to third place for most populous state.*

Census 2000 county population figures are not yet available, but according to 1999 population estimates released by the Census Bureau, Dutchess County's estimated population as of July 1, 1999 was 268,237, a 3.38% increase from 1990. Although the County experienced slower growth in the early and mid '90's, recent years have shown our population increasing at a more significant rate. From 1998 to 1999, Census estimates show the County's population increased 1.06%**; the largest yearly increase in more than ten years.

While our future population growth is unknown, these recent numbers indicate that our time of moderate growth might be over. If Dutchess County looks at the present time as an opportunity to plan for the future, before we experience the rapid growth that other counties have felt, we can all benefit. Municipalities can prepare

for growth by ensuring that they have the tools in place to control how they grow. Communities can do this through review of their Master Plans and Zoning Laws, updating where needed, to reflect the goals of the community. We cannot predict what the future population will be, but with proper planning in place, we can predict what our communities will look like when Census 2010 is done. 🌳

Fastest and Slowest Population Growth Areas of Dutchess County Change 1990 - 1999**

Town of Beekman	+ 15.11%
Town of East Fishkill	+ 13.66%
Village of Millbrook	+ 9.10%
Town of Union Vale	+ 9.06%
Town of Amenia	- 8.66%
City of Poughkeepsie	- 3.85%
Town of Dover	- 3.52%
Dutchess County	+ 3.38%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Population Estimates Program of the Census Bureau (revised 1990-1999)

A MODERN ROUNDABOUT: COMING SOON TO AN INTERSECTION NEAR YOU?

By Lynette Thorne, Planner

Roundabouts are often mistakenly associated with those confusing, high-speed, multi-lane traffic circles. Actually, modern roundabouts are much smaller with fewer lanes (one or two), and traffic moves at slower speeds, making them safer and easier to negotiate. Roundabouts are used not only at highway interchanges; they are also popping up in urban neighborhoods, where they are replacing traditional intersections.

Roundabouts offer several benefits over traditional intersections, including:

- Fewer accidents: a single-lane roundabout has about 75% fewer conflict points (places where the paths of two vehicles could potentially cross), compared to a traditional 4-way intersection; primarily because left turns are eliminated.
- Reduction in accidents involving pedestrians: since roundabouts have a splitter island between entering and exiting lanes, pedestrians can cross one lane at a time and thus only need to check in one direction at a time for approaching traffic.
- Drastic reduction in potential for serious accidents: because roundabouts are designed so that they can only be negotiated at slower speeds, serious accidents are avoided.
- More efficient traffic flow: the flow of traffic only stops when pedestrians are crossing.
- Air quality improvements: because vehicles are stopping and idling less.

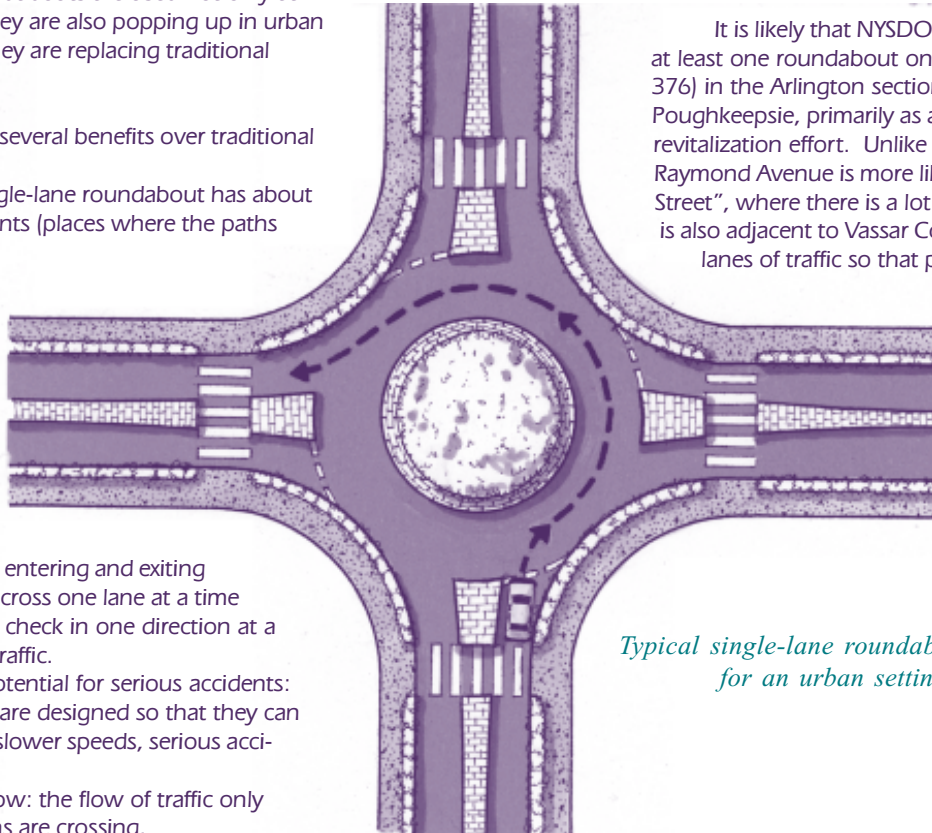
Roundabouts can also be very attractive, with the potential to create a focal point or gateway for a neighborhood. The center island creates space for landscape treatments such as fountains, monuments, attractive plantings, or some other creative feature that can lend unique character to an area.

Of course roundabouts are not the perfect solution to all intersection problems. Since pedestrians have to wait for a break in traffic to cross, roundabouts can actually present a difficulty for visually impaired pedestrians, the elderly, people pushing strollers, and others who may be timid about crossing without the aid of a stop light. Some studies also show that roundabouts appear to decrease safety for bicyclists and motorcyclists. Roundabouts can also require more land area than traditional intersections, and their design requires crosswalks to be diverted away from the circle which increases pedestrian crossing distance.

Locally, the NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) recently replaced the traffic circle in Kingston with a much smaller roundabout (the roundabout was actually built inside the traffic circle

while it was still in use). According to Bill Gorton, a Project Manager with the NYSDOT, public response has been mixed in the few weeks the roundabout has been open, but traffic congestion is "gone".

It is likely that NYSDOT will also be installing at least one roundabout on Raymond Avenue (NYS 376) in the Arlington section of the Town of Poughkeepsie, primarily as a result of a local revitalization effort. Unlike the Kingston location, Raymond Avenue is more like a traditional "Main Street", where there is a lot of pedestrian activity (it is also adjacent to Vassar College). Taming four lanes of traffic so that pedestrians can move about safely and conveniently while maintaining efficient traffic flow is the challenge. NYSDOT and many others think that a roundabout may be the best solution. 🌳



*Typical single-lane roundabout design
for an urban setting.*



*This roundabout enhances the gateway to
downtown Annapolis, Maryland.*

A Picture Worth a Thousand Acres....

The Village of Red Hook is surrounded by some of Dutchess County's most productive farmland, an area known as the "Red Hook Breadbasket." This aerial photograph shows the compact, walkable Village and some of the outlying greenbelt farmland that embodies the Town's rural character. This dramatic contrast between village streets and farm landscape strengthens the visual identity of the Village, encourages concentrated residential and commercial development in and immediately around the village center, and prevents sprawling subdivisions into the countryside.

The farmland visible in this photo between the Village and the Hudson River is one of the properties protected by Scenic Hudson, Inc., which purchased conservation easements on more than 1,000 acres of critical farm acreage in Red Hook. An additional 100 acres was secured by Dutchess County and the Dutchess Land Conservancy with grants from New York State's Department of Agriculture and Markets and Dutchess County's Matching Grant Fund.

The Town and Village of Red Hook and the Village of Tivoli recently completed an intermunicipal Open Space Plan, the first of its kind in Dutchess County. The Town has already established an Agricultural Advisory Committee and taken the next steps toward supporting the Town's farming industry and protecting its scenic integrity. 🌳

